Instructions and Rubrics Used in SLM, LTS, and WRT for

- Discussions
- Learning Logs (called Writing Journals in the WRT courses)

All online courses in School Librarianship, Learning Technologies, and Writing for Children and Young Adults adhere 100% to best practices as stated in *Quality Matters*.

This means that all courses adhere to the same organization and structure. This PDF includes the detailed instructions for Discussions and Learning Logs for all courses.

The first few weeks of the online environment may be stressful, but you will soon feel comfortable. Reviewing the instructions ahead of time will help with organizing your time wisely.

Best,

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Purpose

The purpose of the discussion board postings is to facilitate professional growth through collaborative critical discourse. Through discussion of relevant topics, candidates will write initial in-depth reflections on a topic and respond to each other to further both their own and each other's understanding of the issues and topics addressed. It demonstrates appropriate hours of faculty-to-candidate and candidate-to-candidate interaction as a component of basic credit hour requirements.

The Discussion Board satisfies appropriate hours of faculty-to-student and student-to-student interaction as a component of basic credit hour requirements.

Resources

- [Narrated Key Points on these Discussion Instructions for LTS, SLM, WRT courses](#).
- The texts, activities, and your classmates are all resources for this assignment. You will analyze and integrate all learning materials and experiences in your responses to the discussion questions.

Background

This is an online, learning community-based class. Class participation—whether it be conversation in an asynchronous discussion board, peer review of other students' work, or participation in an online activity—is one of the main assessments of this class. Think of the Discussion Forum as a place—the virtual space where you "attend" class and the heart of this course.

The Discussion Forum is where you:

- learn through conversation,
- interact with your instructor and fellow students,
- ask questions,
- share your work,
- offer (and receive) peer review on some of your major projects.

In short, the Discussion Board is where we will all enhance and support our professional growth. As such, you are assessed on the quantity and quality of your Forum Participation.

Your Task

We ask that everyone log on to Blackboard a minimum of four times a week and participate in the required class conversations. Each module will have a forum with several threads. In most cases, you will be asked to participate in each of the threads (typically 4-6).

The conversations work best when participants log on throughout the week—preferably at least once at the beginning of the week (first couple of days), at least once in the middle of the week (second couple of days), and at least once during the last part of the week (last 2-3 days).

Things to Remember

1. The goal is to have dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the module, so postings should be distributed throughout the discussion period (not on one day or just at the beginning or end of the discussion period.) Attend class and participate in the discussion board a minimum of 4 times per week. Posting on Sunday may be too late for your classmates to respond.
   1. You are expected to post in the **forum** at least 4 days per week / 8 days per module. **NOTE**: this does not imply you're only making a total of 8 posts. On the *average*, students who earn full points tend to post somewhere between 25-40 posts per module.
   2. You should participate in the **forum** early in each week (by Wednesday evening) by posting in at least two **threads**.
   3. You need to have at least one original post in each **thread**.
   4. You should contribute at least **4** posts per **thread**. These posts are spread over the 2 weeks of the module.
2. Your response posts should be thorough. Simply posting "I agree" does not move the discussion forward. Provide examples, questions, or related materials that can further the conversation.
3. Respect others' ideas and respond to the content of the messages. Keep in mind the difference between critical thinking and just being critical.
4. Keep the discussion related to the topic.
5. Please include **MLA formatted citations** for directly quoted or paraphrased material.
6. Discussion Questions and Weekly Summaries, unlike formal assignments, do not need to adhere to specific formatting requirements. However, please proofread DQ responses carefully. Grammar and spelling may impact the grading.
7. When you are peer-reviewing, follow a SWS format—acknowledging **S**trengths, noting possible **W**eaknesses, and offering **S**uggestions to consider. **S.W.S.** is an adaptation of the S.W.O.T. analysis. See http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_05.htm.

Checklist of Criteria
1. Candidates attend class regularly and read all posts. The teacher knows this by reading discussion posts and by checking the course statistics for candidates.
2. Contributions build on ideas of others; the posts make connections with others' ideas and the course readings and activities. The posts extend the conversation. Success is determined if people continue the conversation.
3. Posts apply information from texts, course bibliography, and professional sources.
4. Posts incorporate new knowledge, show critical thought, and provide authentic, relevant examples.
5. Posts add something fresh to every conversation.
6. Posts demonstrate synthesis and analysis.

Upon Completion

One week after the close of each module, your teacher will use this rubric to assign discussion points and provide feedback.
In Module 4, your discussion should be completed by the last Thursday at 11:59 p.m.

	Discussion Board Rubric Value: 12 points per module for total of 48 points or 24% of Total Class Grade			
	Exemplary	**Proficient**	**Developing**	**Unsatisfactory**
Timeliness	**3 Points** 4 or more contributions in the **required** forum threads (including original post and	**2 Points** 3 or more contributions in the	**1 Point** Just 1 or 2 contributions in the	**0 Points** May be missing postings in the

	response to others) at least 4 days per week / 8 days per module. Original postings occur in at least two threads each week by Wednesday evening.	**required** forum threads. Postings are balanced throughout the 2-week module.	**required** forum threads. Postings may be heavy on some days.	**required** forum threads. Response may be brief "yes" or "I agree." Candidate may seem to disappear from class.
Question: Were there at least two or more thoughtful posts preferably at least once at the beginning of the week (first couple of days), at least once in the middle of the week (second couple of days), and at least once during the last part of the week (last 2-3 days)?				
	6 Points	**5 Points**	**4 Points**	**0,1,2,3 Points**
Knowledge: General Discussions	Posts go beyond the mere recapitulation of material presented in the course by demonstrating: (1) the use of **prior knowledge** through the provision of authentic, relevant examples, (2) the **analysis of course material** (texts, course bibliography, and professional sources) and Discussion Board threads through careful, critical thought (i.e. summarization; comparisons and contrasts; inferences, etc.), (3) the **synthesis of course material** through the integration of the new understandings developed with prior knowledge, (4) the **extension of new understandings** through their application to professional practice with examples and/or recommendations, (5) the **assumption of responsibility** for the depth of dialog within the Discussion Board as evidenced by the addition of fresh ideas and probing questions to all threads. Comprehensively answers question in row below.	Contributions demonstrate at least 4 of the criteria in the exemplary category and often add new perspectives and/or pose additional questions for further discussion and reflection by others.	Contributions demonstrate at least 2 criteria. Posts may show only a beginning evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content and deep engagement with classmates.	Contributions may lack clear focus or off topic. Not evident that readings were understood and/or not incorporated into discussion. Postings may not encourage others to converse. Response may be brief "yes" or "I agree."
Question: Do posts show evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content and include ideas, questions, or resources that extend the learning of the group?				

	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Professional Dispositions & Response to Candidates' Postings and Activities	Consistently shared good (or bad) books so enthusiastically, clearly, and succinctly that they enticed 2 students or more to read the book; Posts (1) model tact, sensitivity, respect, honesty, and acceptance of others; (2) contribute to trust building and growth of the class community; (3) seek supplemental ways to be a better learner. Contributions build on ideas of others by adding a new perspective, pose additional questions for further discussion and reflection by others. Peer Reviews are constructive using S.W.S. or commend, commend, recommend. Comprehensively answers question in row below.	Shared good (or bad) books so enthusiastically, clearly, and succinctly that she/he enticed at least 1 student to read the book. Contributions demonstrate first 2 criteria in the exemplary category. Contributions occasionally add new perspectives and/or pose additional questions for further discussion and reflection by others. Peer Reviews are occasionally constructive.	Shared books; some posts engage the other candidates. Demonstrates politeness. Slips in professional dispositions may occur. Contributions often do not add new perspectives and/or pose additional questions. Peer Reviews are supportive and positive but don't help with revisions.	While posted comments, many posts did not elicit a response from candidates; may not be clear from posts that candidate read the book. 1 or more online professional online protocols may not be adhered to. Contributions may rarely add new perspectives and/or pose additional questions. Peer Reviews may be missing.

Question: Do the posts provide constructive feedback, integrate multiple viewpoints, elicit further discussion, and/or move the discussion forward?

Purpose

Individual Learning Logs are critical components of this online class. Essentially, the Learning Log is a reflective journal that chronicles your learning experiences with: (a) the course objectives, (b) assigned readings, (c) individual assignments, and (d) community of fellow learners.

You are the expert on your own learning, and this class should be a kind of journey. The Learning Log is intended to give you an opportunity to reflectively capture that journey. Please feel free to chronicle the problems and failures (e.g. readings you had difficulty with, concepts that didn't make sense, assignments that didn't seem to work for you) as well as the successes.

The Learning Log is the designated place to write your Description, Analysis, and Reflection statements (DARs) for each assignment. This third post is designed to give you a strong draft for when you take your last course, SLM 550 Professional Portfolio. In SLM 550, you'll be selecting artifacts from your previous courses and writing reflection statements. These artifacts will document that you have met the ALA/AASL/CAEP *School Librarian Preparation Standards* (2019). See the SLM page for examples of previous candidates' professional portfolios. Save all learning logs from all your courses in one spot so that you can easily access them in SLM 550.

Resources

- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. **General Portfolio Instructions**. See Table of Contents, page 25 for explanation of writing the Description, Analysis, and Reflection statements.)
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. **Scoring Guide for Candidates**. These links may not work unless you are currently enrolled in a Blackboard course.)

Background

For reflections on assignments, we are following the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) requirement for written commentaries. **There are three parts: description, analysis, and reflection.** As a result, when you seek National Board certification, you will be familiar with the format.

By reflecting in this way, you will set the foundation for a routine of consistent professional reflection on growth and needs of your program and your growth and needs as a school librarian. These reflections will provide the basis and justification for your decisions about your professional development.

Your Task

We will use the Blackboard blog feature for our class Learning Logs. You will see a link to the Learning Logs / blog feature on the main course menu of Blackboard.

1. You are expected to make three strong posts. Make the first post sometime on the first few days of the new module, the second sometime during the first weekend and the third during the last few days of the module.
2. Title the posts beginning with the words: Module 1, Module 2, Module 3, and/or Module 4 and then include a unique subtitle for each post.
3. For the **first** post, review the module objectives and restate them in your own words. This is a simple strategy to help you focus, stay organized for the next two weeks, and helps make learning "authentic." You may want to revisit your goal(s) in the final post for that module.

4. The **second** post is an aha moment, a discovery, something important you don't want to forget. Explain what 'big idea,' concept or issue from this module had the greatest impact on your thinking. Why? The aha post should reflect our readings. One paragraph is often long enough.
5. For the **third** post, reflect on the assignment itself. Review the ALA/AASL/CAEP components and explain how the assignment met the components. Make three headings: Description, Analysis, and Reflection.
   1. **Description**: Identify the assignment and the ALA/AASL/CAEP component that the assignment meets. What were the intended outcomes? If you have trouble stating this succinctly, review the purpose of the assignment.
   2. **Analysis**: What were the essential strengths and weaknesses of your artifact (assignment)? Provide concrete evidence and demonstrate the significance of the evidence. What were unanticipated learning outcomes? Describe the specifics of what you learned and how you did it. What will you do differently next time?
   3. **Reflection**: Involves self-analysis. Connect with your feelings. How do you feel about this artifact? Briefly explain how the artifact demonstrates the ALA/AASL/CAEP standard. What was the most significant thing learned, the obstacles encountered, and what more do you want to learn?
6. The Learning Logs are the place to express how your ideas and opinions have evolved because of our discussions. How has your participation in our discussions impacted you personally? What are you learning from our class members? Reflection improves when you make connections between the readings, assignments, discussions, and class members.

Upon Completion

At the end of each module, your teacher will use this rubric and post your points in the "Grade Center." If you have questions on the points assigned, study the rubric, and figure out what was missing in your posts. Then, you may also ask the teacher for additional feedback.

In Module 4, complete the log by the last Thursday at 11:59 p.m.

LEARNING LOG RUBRIC				
Assignment Value: 6 points per module for total of 24 points or 12% of Total Grade				
	Exemplary 21-24 points	**Proficient** 19-20 points	**Developing** 16-18 points	**Unsatisfactory** 0-15 points
Frequency & Headings	**1.5 Points** 3 entries per module. Entries are evenly spaced throughout the two-week module. Thread titles begin with Module 1,2,3, or 4 and include a subtitle.	**1 Point** 2 entries per module. Titles begin with Module 1,2,3, or 4.	**.5 Points** 1 entry per module. All posts may be made on the same day. Thread titles don't help organize the reflections**.**	**0 Points** Incomplete postings. Thread titles don't help organize the reflections.
Connecting the learning experiences with course objectives,	**4-4.5 Points** Creates 3 posts demonstrating: (1)	**3.5 Points**	**3 Points** Demonstrates 1-2 exemplary criteria.	**0-2.5 points**

| readings, discussions, assignments, ALA/AASL/CAEP standards;

Reflections and Conclusions | personal learning goals that are authentic and reflect the module's objectives, (2) an 'aha' moment that powerfully captures the joy of learning, what was learned, demonstrating connections between the readings, discussions, and/or assignments, and (3) third post comprehensively captures the assignment's description, analysis, and reflection (DAR) and will serve as a strong draft for the SLM 550 portfolio course. (4) Entries are characterized by the depth of reflective analysis and demonstrates growth over the module. | Demonstrates 3 exemplary criteria.

Entries are often reflective and occasionally demonstrate growth over the module.

Clear straightforward prose. | | May be missing exemplary criteria.

May be missing reflection or growth. |